

From: Richard Wolfe
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

As a minority in the computing world, a Macintosh user, I feel the direct power that Microsoft has over the computing world everyday.

The Macintosh platform only survives in the eyes of the consumer as long as Microsoft continues to supply the Office productivity suite.

Microsoft supplies the Office productivity suite but ensures that key apps [Access, Outlook, FrontPage, Publisher, Project, Visio, MapPoint, Data Analyzer, and PhotoDraw] are not available to the Macintosh audience. This lets the consumer know that if you really want the power of office then you had better use the Windows OS. Note: Outlook for the Mac is available as a separate download, but it still lags in feature/interoperability parity with the Windows version.

PC Office

<http://www.microsoft.com/office/programs/default.htm>

Mac Office

<http://www.microsoft.com/mac/officex/default.asp?navindex=s16>

The recent shift in Internet Explorer's reliance on ActiveX as opposed to the Netscape PlugIn architecture to display rich media within the browser benefits only Microsoft, and has far reaching future consequences in its platform specific nature. See the effects of this direction in the link below:

<http://developer.apple.com/quicktime/compatibility.html>

<http://www.mayim.com/wdk/docs/whatsnew.html>

Also the tying of ActiveX and the new .Net initiatives to both Internet Explorer and the Windows OS, is leading to the demise of "Internet for Everyone." The internet by its sheer nature was platform agnostic. Microsoft is on the road to change that, if not by making certain sites work only under Internet Explorer and Windows OS, but by also giving the appearance that sites "work better" if you use Windows OS. This appearance issue weighs in heavily with the average consumer when it comes down to platform of choice. Sites where this is of great concern are the online banking/billpayment/financial management systems. [the links below are old but illustrate the point]

<http://www.heidsite.com/macshame/default.html>

http://www.google.com/search?q=cache:vHGblQbPmbgC:www.latimes.com/technology/consumer/macfocus/la-000011724jun30.story%3Fcoll%3Dla-business-mac_focus+web+sites+that+don%3Bt+work+with+macs&hl=en

Microsoft's behavior in the past suggests that the Macintosh platform is allowed to survive so as to give the appearance of OS competition. Sure

there are the *nix's but only Macintosh directly competes on the desktop. One wonders how much longer the Macintosh platform will be around given that Microsoft has been proven to be a monopolist but the remedy, thus far provided, lacks no real bite and seems to give the company the right to continue business as usual - or as Microsoft would put it "continue to innovate."

The remedy that I would prefer to see put in place is one that places Microsoft back on playing field, let alone a level one. Other people have come up with remedies that I agree with, so I'll quote them rather than claim them to be my own:

"With Microsoft's APIs and file formats fully standardized, documented and published, other software vendors could compete fairly -- which, after all, is what antitrust laws are supposed to promote. We might then be faced with a welcome but long unfamiliar sight: a healthy software market, driven, as today's processor market is, by genuine competition. " Scott Rosenberg

<http://www.salon.com/tech/col/rose/2002/01/16/competition/index.html>

and the comments of Robert X. Cringely

<http://www.pbs.org/cringely/pulpit/pulpit20011206.html>

<http://www.pbs.org/cringely/pulpit/pulpit20011108.html>

and finally the comments of Mr Nader

<http://www.cptech.org/at/ms/rnj12kollarkotellynov501.html>

I'm sorry if this has gone on too long, but I just wish to have a say in what will be our future... a future that will probably be controlled by Windows.

Thank you

Richard Wolfe